

## OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY & PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## **News Release**

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## Prosecuting Attorney and Planning Director condemn VRBO and Homeaway for soliciting illegal rentals, and caution homeowners against illegal usage

LĪHU'E – Prosecuting Attorney Justin F. Kollar and Planning Director Michael Dahilig are strongly condemning VRBO (Vacation Rental By Owner) and Homeaway for soliciting prospective vacation rental homes from landowners across Kaua'i County who do not have legal permission to do so.

In mass mailers received by many county residents, VRBO encourages homeowners to place their homes into vacation rental usage by incentivizing new operations with a guaranteed \$1,000 in income for the month of January.

"These mailers only confirm the predatory practices of some in the homeshare industry and this needs to stop," said Dahilig. "VRBO's and Homeaway's unethical actions highlight their complete disregard for the impacts their reckless corporate actions create for our communities by taking housing away from our local residents."

The mailers sent from VRBO's Austin, Texas, facility characterizes "unprecedented demand" from travelers looking to stay at communities across the island. The Planning Department has received confirmation that letters were received from residents in Anahola, Kapa'a, Līhu'e, and Waimea. These areas are not resort communities under law.

"I take seriously any organization actively recruiting Kaua'i's homeowners into engaging in illegal activities harming our communities," said Kollar. "These companies should be ashamed of themselves, and aware that any of their activities will be investigated for criminal wrongdoing and potentially prosecuted."

The Prosecutor and Director wish to remind all that vacation rentals outside of county-designated visitor destination areas are illegal without a non-conforming use certificate and is punishable by a misdemeanor, and/or civil fines up to \$10,000 per day.

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